



DEPARTMENT OF STATE AMERICAN-SPONSORED ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

WORLDWIDE FACT SHEET 2014-2015

The Worldwide Context: The school-age children of overseas Americans--estimated to number nearly a quarter million--attend a wide variety of schools. Most of the children of military personnel attend schools established and operated by the U.S. Department of Defense. Children of U.S. Government civilian agency employees abroad most often attend non-government, coeducational, independent schools of various kinds. Although these schools include those founded by U.S. companies, church organizations, and individual proprietors, the majority are nonprofit, non-denominational, independent schools established on a cooperative basis by American citizens residing in foreign communities. Many of the schools in this latter group receive assistance and support from the U.S. Government under a program administered by the Office of Overseas Schools, U.S. Department of State. The schools that receive such assistance constitute the "American-sponsored" schools described in this Fact Sheet.

Basic Characteristics: No statement about the American-sponsored overseas schools would apply without exception or qualification. Variety is one of their basic characteristics. They range from small schools, such as the American International School of Libreville in Libreville, Gabon, with 50 students, to large overseas schools, such as the Singapore American School with 3,934 students. School facilities range from rented homes to multi-million dollar campuses, although increasing numbers of overseas schools now occupy purpose-built facilities.

The U.S. Government does not operate or control the schools. Ownership of the schools is typically in the hands of a parents' association. Parents elect a school board for a specific term to govern the school and hire the chief administrator. All schools are subject, in varying degrees, to host-country laws and regulations pertaining to educational practices, importation of educational materials, and personnel practices.

Tuition payments are the principal source of financing for the schools. Many schools derive additional support from gifts and contributions from U.S. and local business firms, foundations, individuals, and local governments; and all receive some assistance from the limited funds available under the program of the Office of Overseas Schools.

The schools' instructional programs provide a core curriculum that prepares students to enter schools, colleges, and universities in the United States. The language of instruction is English, supplemented in most schools with the local language. The content of the educational programs is American, but can vary. Certain schools, especially in Latin America, must also fulfill host-country curriculum requirements.

The schools' curricula tend to be largely academic, with relatively little attention given to vocational or commercial education. An outstanding characteristic of most American-sponsored overseas schools is the use they make of their locations abroad to provide foreign language and local culture programs. The quality and range of instructional materials are excellent in an increasing number of the schools. Indeed, the quality of computer programs in many of these schools exceeds that of comparable schools in the United States.

Most of the administrators and nearly half of the teachers in these schools are Americans or educated in U.S. colleges and universities. A portion of the American staff is hired locally, and a number of these are U.S. Government dependent spouses. All teachers are college graduates, and the majority hold teaching certificates. The local and third-country teachers are well qualified. Hiring of staff is the responsibility of the individual schools.

This Fact Sheet is intended to provide general information. Prospective users of the Schools may wish to inquire further of A/OPR/OS or contact the School directly for more specific and up-to-the-minute information regarding curriculum, special programs, and the like. Statistics provided by the Schools.

Statistics on American-Sponsored Overseas Schools Assisted by the U.S. Department of State: During the 2014-2015 school year, the Office of Overseas Schools is assisting 195 schools in 136 countries. The purposes of the assistance program are to help the schools provide quality education for children of U.S. Government employees and to demonstrate to foreign nationals the philosophy and methods of American education. The schools are open to nationals of all countries. As such, these schools are critical to our foreign policy objective of strengthening mutual understanding between Americans and the people of other countries.

Enrollment in the schools at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year totaled 134,867, of whom 36,409 were U.S. citizens. Of 17,645 teachers and administrators employed in the schools, 7,502 were U.S. citizens. Summary statistics on the American-sponsored overseas schools appear in the table below.

REGION	Number of Countries	Number of Schools	High Schools	PROFESSIONAL STAFF				STUDENT ENROLLMENT			
				U.S.	Host-Country	Third-Country	Totals	U.S.	Host Country	Third Country	Totals
AFRICA	36	41	35	889	492	848	2,229	3,645	4,079	9,182	16,906
AMERICAN REPUBLICS	25	40	40	1,392	2,118	544	4,054	6,396	17,080	7,818	31,294
EAST ASIA	14	25	24	1,852	340	1,368	3,560	12,196	3,432	14,192	29,820
EUROPE	45	66	63	2,026	1,517	1,894	5,437	7,802	10,732	18,735	37,269
NEAR EAST/ SOUTH ASIA	16	23	23	1,343	327	695	2,365	6,370	3,727	9,481	19,578
TOTALS	136	195	185	7,502	4,794	5,349	17,645	36,409	39,050	59,408	134,867

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